

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1177

By Naifeh

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend Reta Adams for honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, throughout her many years of legislative service, Reta Adams has distinguished herself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to the Tennessee General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams performs her daily tasks in a diligent and professional manner, eagerly takes on additional assignments, is respectful to all, and exemplifies a terrific work ethic; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams first came to work for the State of Tennessee in 1974 at what was then known simply as the Department of Conservation. She worked there for a short period of time before the opportunity arose for her in 1975 to focus her skills on work at the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams first worked in the Legislative Branch for Speaker Pro Tempore Cletus McWilliams and Representative Harper Brewer, with their offices in the Legislative Plaza; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, then-Speaker Ned McWherter asked her to undertake the responsibility of working with a young Representative from West Tennessee, Jimmy Naifeh, who served at that time as both Majority Floor Leader and Secretary of Calendar and Rules.

Speaker McWherter told her to go take care of Naifeh, to which she replied, “Ok, who’s Naifeh?”; and

WHEREAS, from the first time Reta Adams stepped into her duties at the General Assembly, she quickly earned the respect of her peers. She arrived at work early and stayed late; completed her tasks in a timely fashion; and was patient and respectful to all—constituents, citizens, members, and staff; and

WHEREAS, because she had to begin work at an early age, she did not go through as much school as some people do nowadays, yet she thrived in the legislative environment. Over the years, Reta Adams paid her “dues” and her efforts did not go unrewarded. She consistently was given more and more duties and responsibilities, and she excelled at all of them; and

WHEREAS, over the years, she has dealt with requests from literally every General Assembly member, every staff member, and members of the Executive branch, including governors. In that time, she treated all with the honor and respect they deserve; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams concentrated all her efforts on her chosen profession. She ably served in the Office of the House Speaker, Jimmy Naifeh, from 1991 to 2008, spending an extraordinary eighteen years in that office. Through her hard work and dedication, she eventually attained the much-deserved position of Deputy Chief of Staff in 2004 and served in that capacity through 2008. She currently serves in the Office of Speaker Emeritus Naifeh; and

WHEREAS, her hard work ethic, her knowledge of the issues, and her capacity to carry out tasks earned her a place at the table on Wednesday mornings, when leadership breakfast meetings with the governors (McWherter, Sundquist, and Bredesen) took place; and

WHEREAS, Reta also devotes additional time to extracurricular activities related to the General Assembly. For as long as anyone can remember, she has coached the legislative interns in their practices and annual basketball game against the members of the General Assembly. The interns have come out on top more times than the members care to remember; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams also has devoted additional time over the years to other General Assembly-related extracurricular activities, such as the Annual Golf Tournament to raise money for St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital (The Wild West Shoot Out), the annual

Legislative Halloween Party, the annual Legislative Christmas Breakfast, and many other worthy causes; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams has interacted for years with her peers from other states and with speakers of the House and members from other states through her participation in the National Speaker's Conference, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Southern Legislative Conference. When conferences of this nature were held in Tennessee, you could be sure that Reta was there to work at them and make sure they were an outstanding success; and

WHEREAS, her accomplishments, efforts, and dedication have not gone unnoticed by her peers, as shown when she earned the coveted and much deserved 2011 House Legislative Employee of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Reta hails from the metropolis of Cornersville, Tennessee, a small, close-knit community about sixty miles south of Nashville with a population of about 1,000. In this small, family-oriented community, where everyone knows everyone else, she learned the value of hard work, honesty, and integrity from her parents; and

WHEREAS, she is married to Steve Adams, the former State Treasurer; they have raised two children, Jamie and Brad, to be fine, outstanding adults, and she dotes over her granddaughter, Kayla; and

WHEREAS, Reta Adams plans on completing her career in public service on November 6, 2012, thereby entering a well-earned retirement from State service; and

WHEREAS, exemplifying the characteristics of a true Tennessean, Reta Adams epitomizes the ideal of the dedicated professional who is wholly committed to the highest ideals of public service, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Reta Adams for her many years of distinguished service to the Tennessee General Assembly and the citizens of Tennessee, extend to her our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement, and wish her every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.